

Student Engagement = Student Success

How to Increase Student Engagement with the Use of NAVIANCE

TEN STRATEGIES

When students are engaged in the school environment, they are more likely to achieve success at school. This statement is supported through the research of Center for Evaluation & Education Policy at Indiana University presented in a 2009 report. Students indicate that boredom and lack of relevant learning lead to disengagement.

As school counselors, we know that education is essential for young adults so that they can attain the necessary preparation to pursue higher education which prepares them for their eventual careers. We also understand that the learning which occurs during the middle and high school years helps to develop the skills to become lifelong learners.

Student engagement encompasses three areas: academic engagement, social engagement and emotional engagement.

- Academic engagement is the student's response to instruction, assignments, assessments and the practical learning that occurs in school.
- Social engagement involves any opportunities for student participation in school, such as friendships with other students, clubs and sports, special events (e.g. dances, pep rallies).
- Emotional engagement is the personal relationships that students make with adults in their school community when they feel cared about, valued, listened to, and encouraged by any school staff that they have a connection with.

Students who are engaged in all three areas at a significant level will achieve school success. If we can support and guide the disengaged students in any one of the three areas, then as school counselors we are offering to them a reason to come to school each day.

HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE THIS?

STRATEGY ONE: School counselors should determine how engaged their students are. This can be accomplished in many ways. One method is through the administration of the Gallup Student Poll is an online poll made up of 20 researched questions designed to assess the hope, engagement, and wellbeing of American students. The poll is quick and free to any school in the United States. It provides information on how students fair in three areas which are the elements of student success: hope, involvement and overall well-being. Counselors can use these results as a starting point in their work to better support engage their students.

STRATEGY TWO: With the help of NAVIANCE, school counselors can encourage engagement in the academic, social and emotional areas by introducing students to the numerous programs which NAVIANCE offers. These programs make learning meaningful and relevant by giving learning a direct purpose. If students need a reason to learn the middle and high school curriculum, school counselors can offer these reasons. For example, counselors should work with students on their "game plan" – NAVIANCE has a Game Plan Survey which all 9th grade students should take in September. This exercise will promote students to publically identify ideas they may already have regarding future plans; for those who have not considered any future plans, this exercise begins the process of shaping their futures.

STRATEGY THREE: Many students have not made the connection between middle/high school learning and post high school education. NAVIANCE provides students a place to explore two and four year educational opportunities. School counselors can introduce students to the college exploration and search features of NAVIANCE. Students will learn the admission requirements including necessary courses and standardized testing.

STRATEGY FOUR: Connecting learning to careers is another feature which NAVIANCE makes available through the Career Key and Interest Profiler. Students learn about their interests and how these interests match with careers. Do What You Are, a NAVIANCE instrument, helps students connect their personality tendencies to careers. School counselors work with students in the classroom, in small groups and individually so that students increase their knowledge of the self and how learning is relevant. The Strength Explorer, which is based upon the concept of multiple intelligences, helps students recognize their areas of strength and how these areas are tools for success.

STRATEGY FIVE: School counselors can promote student engagement by seeking out the “student voice.” Students feel valued when their ideas and opinions are asked for and acted upon. NAVIANCE can be used to seek out student opinion and input by creating student opinion polls through the [SURVEY BUILDER](#) feature. Use a centrally located monitor to display the results. Student input can be sought on issues which impact students such as student council elections or themes for Spirit Week or the name of the school’s mascot.

STRATEGY SIX: Students respond to praise and recognition which will increase their sense of belonging to a supportive school community. Student social engagement will increase when school counselors establish a social media account such as Twitter or Instagram, to share student achievements. Counselors can embed this feed into the Family Connection page on NAVIANCE so that when students log on to NAVIANCE they read of their peers’ successes. Counselors can involve student leaders in making posts. Counselors can also create a BLOG or Pinterest Board to share information on essay writing tips or trends in college admissions. This BLOG/Pinterest Board link should also be embedded on the Family Connection Page.

STRATEGY SEVEN: Students need to see examples of career success. This enables them to grow emotionally in their understanding of the elements of career success. School counselors can host a College and Career Readiness Day using community, real-life professionals to share their education and paths, as well as the challenges of their careers. Counselors can develop a student survey in NAVIANCE to determine which speakers students would most like to hear.

STRATEGY SEVEN: School counselors should facilitate the connection of students and the adults in the school building. These relationships help students experience emotional engagement in school. This may be achieved in many ways including highlighting staff, their interests and achievements. This information can be posted on the Family Connection page of NAVIANCE.

STRATEGY EIGHT: School counselors can expose students to the [Roadtrip Nation Interview Archive](#) found on NAVIANCE. These brief interviews provide students with inspiring stories by themes such as fear, failure, and perseverance in order to learn how leaders overcome challenges similar to what students may experience. Students can also explore the archive by interests like film, entrepreneurship, or science to find people whose interests match with their own ambitions.

STRATEGY NINE: School counselors share the responsibility of monitoring student success/dropout indicators. NAVIANCE has a report feature which can be synced with the School Information System to provide counselors with reports on course grades, course completion, GPA, standardized test scores, course planning rigor, and Student Success Plan task completion.

STRATEGY TEN: NAVIANCE supports efficient and paper-free communication with parents. School-wide, grade level, group or individual emails can be easily sent through NAVIANCE from school counselors on a variety of topics including upcoming college visitations, impending deadlines or student progress in the college application process.